

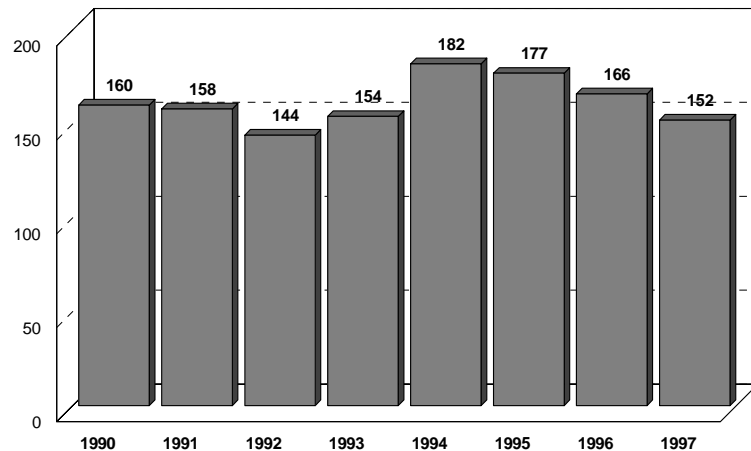
Teen Violent Death

The number of teen violent deaths has grown substantially in the past decade for teens ages 15-19. Between 1985 and 1996, the rate of teen deaths per 100,000 increased by 20.9 percent in Tennessee. Violent deaths include motor vehicle accidents, suicides, and homicides.

Motor vehicle accidents continue to be the leading cause of violent deaths among teens. More than half (152) of the 296 deaths were due to motor vehicle accidents. The majority of the motor vehicle deaths could have been prevented if more of the teens had been wearing seat belts.

Number of Teen (Ages 15-19) Motor Vehicle Accident Deaths

1990-1997



Source: Division of Information Resources, Tennessee Department of Health.

The second leading cause of teen violent deaths is firearms. In 1997, firearm-related deaths accounted for almost 70 percent (68.8) of deaths not caused by motor vehicle accidents. Greater access to firearms by teens is partly responsible for this finding. It is estimated that nationally students carry 270,000 guns to school every day.

Nationally, Tennessee ranked 40th on this indicator. As reported in the 1999 *Kids Count Data Book*, the state's teen violent death rate in 1996 was 30.6 percent higher than the national average. In 1996, the U.S. average was 62 per 100,000 teens, compared to Tennessee's 1996 rate of 81 per 100,000.

The most populated Tennessee counties with large urban areas – Shelby, Davidson, Knox, and Hamilton counties – accounted for 39 percent of the teen violent deaths.

Young Driving Deaths

Deaths Per 100,000 Licensed Drivers in Three Age Groups

Year	16	17-19	20+
1975	19	27	14
1980	29	31	14
1985	26	25	12
1990	30	28	12
1995	32	25	11
1996	35	25	11

National Highway Transportation Safety Administration